

## An Interview With

HENRY D. DANIELS

January 15, 1981

Henry D. Daniels was interviewed on January 15, 1981, at the Estes Park Area Historical Museum. Mel Busch, Betty Hedlund, and Marge Wolpert conducted the interview.

The tape is on file at the Estes Park Public Library and may be checked out. The reader should keep in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written word.

The Estes Park oral history project is jointly sponsored by the Estes Park Area Historical Museum and the Estes Park Public Library.

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Interview with Henry D. Dannels (HD)

Date of interview: January 15, 1981

Interviewers: Mel Busch (MB), Betty Hedlund (BH), and Marge Wolpert (MW)

Location: Estes Park Area Historical Museum

MB This is Thursday, January 15, 1981, and we are at the Estes Park Area Historical Museum to get a taped interview with Henry Dannels, a long-time resident of Estes Park and lifetime resident of the general area. I'm Mel Busch, curator of the museum, and also on the tape will be Marge Wolpert and Betty Hedlund, who will give their names for identification purposes.

MW I'm Marge Wolpert.

BH I'm Betty Hedlund.

HD I'm Henry Dannels.

MB The place to start, although the information is written down in many places, is where and when you were born and a little bit about your family.

BH If you don't want to put your age in here, you don't have to!

MB We'll look it up!

MW We know that you've been here a long time, and that would help, too, with any--

HD I haven't lived right in the Estes Park area except since about 1936, but I've worked here since 1919. In 1896 my dad homesteaded the place that's the Mountain Prairie Girl Scout Camp, and then I was born in 1901. So that's how you can figure out how old I am!

The first place I ever worked in Estes Park was to help build the Craggs Hotel in the winter of 1919-20. My folks lived in Allenspark, and I'd walk home every two weeks on Saturday night and back on Sunday. Those days there was no other way to go unless by horse, and because I couldn't afford a horse, I went on foot.

I lived in Allenspark and have worked in the area all of my life for that matter, but when Bernie was ready for high school, kids weren't bussed in those days. So we moved here to be close to the high school. That was about 1937, and we've been here ever since. I was in the lumber business a good part of my life with my dad, until we moved over here. Then, I started this little building business we've got here.

MW Where did you go to school?

HD In Allenspark--a few winters. We had summer school in Allenspark because the kids all lived two miles or more from school, and it was too hard to get to school in the winter. There were only four kids; the largest number of kids that were ever in school in Allenspark while I was there was five! Then it went down to two, and then when I was out of school, there was one year when my brother and Red Dietrich were the only students in two districts. They had school out there

at what they called the Bunce schoolhouse; it's that building right behind the Kelly House. My brother rode horseback to school, and Red lived pretty close there.

MB And your brother's name...?

HD Shelby, and he died three years ago.

BH Wasn't that the Bunce School which was used later as the firehouse?

HD I don't know what it is now. I suppose it is a private residence, but the same old building is there.

BH Probably, I've been in it and know what it looked like--a log house.

HD Our little old schoolhouse at Allenspark was torn down, of course, somewhere along in the forties, and they built the one that is there now. The old schoolhouse was just an old slab shack, more like a mixed-up box than a house!

MB Was it located in the same place that the building is now?

HD Same place. I thought that they had moved it, but because I wasn't over there at the time, I'm not sure. I don't know whether they tore down the building or moved it. Of course, there used to be a schoolhouse at Wild Basin, and the building is still there. I had a half-sister who went to school there before I was old enough to go to school.

BH Where was that located?

HD Well, it's just before you get to where the lodge was.

BH Coming from--?

HD Coming from here towards Allenspark, it's on the old county road. It's a little farther up the hill from where the road is now.

BH It wasn't hurt by that fire; it still stands?

HD No, it still stands. It was quite a ways. It's been turned into a private residence and has been added on to, but I don't know what part the schoolhouse was. In fact, my sister and Norm Billings and Frank Hornbaker were the whole school--those three kids!

MB And your sister's name for the record?

HD Well, her name was Welch, her maiden name, and she married John Miller. None of her folks are around this country. She was born in Arkansas someplace.

MW I know I read the old schoolhouse was near Copeland Lake. Is that pretty much the spot?

HD Yes, but it is this side of the lodge, just shortly after you turn into the paved road, the way the road is now. There is a road to the right that you take up around it.

BH I think I know where it is!

MW Too bad they can't preserve it for history!

HD That's right. I notice this book that you've got here. There's a lot of stuff in that book which is not right, and I called the author up and told her so.

MB Well, why don't you make the corrections with the tape here?

HD There's nothing that amounts to anything, but she mentioned some people as being my family, when it isn't so! This person is an aunt of mine, and that one is a half-sister of mine. I don't even know who the rest of them are! The two I know are both dead and gone.

MW It says something here about your aunt. Are the Noyes related?

HD Yes, my mother's name was Noyes. That was my mother's name in her first marriage. Her name was Mary Crayne Noyes when she and dad were married, and she lived in Ward.

MW At that time your mother had three children, right, Rosie, Julia, and William?

HD Julia and William went to school at Allenspark, of course, before my time, but Rosie went to school at Wild Basin, Copeland Lake, they called it.

MW Now is there any relation to the Noyes here?

HD No, he was a miner. They lived in Ward and Jimtown. This Mrs. Mabel Downer Durning got most of her information from Vera Rubendall, who moved into the area in 1927 or '28. Before that, Vera Rubendall hadn't been there at all.

BH You lived down by Ferncliff Ranch in one of those little houses, didn't you? You had a little log house down there.

HD Yes. The first place my wife and I had was the first house on the left along from Allenspark down the creek.

BH Yes, on the old road.

MW Where did you meet your wife? Where did you meet Jo, if it is any of our business?

HD I met her at a sawmill of all places!

MW Did she live in Allenspark?

HD No, she was born in Denver and raised over in Delta and Cedar Ridge, over in that country. She was taking nurse's training at a Boulder sanatorium, and I had a cousin in the same class with her. They came up to the ranch, and we had a sawmill on what we called Buck Creek, which would be on the lower end of the Ferncliff meadow. We were working there in mid-April, and that's the worst place I've ever seen!

BH Did you have anything to do with the building of that Ferncliff Ranch or that H-Bar, whatever they call it, that just burned?

HD Yes. Mostly what burned was additions, but I built that for Michael Marden.

BH I thought that you did.

MW Then Michael lived up there?

HD Michael lived there until he moved here. Michael didn't have any money. He didn't come close to having that much money, but he had an aunt that paid for this lodge for him. He was going to do great things there, but when he and his aunt agreed to disagree, that stopped that! Then, he moved and had that dairy business going, and that's what busted it. He moved over here and had it going here for a little while. Things got worse and worse, and finally he went clear broke.

MB While you're on that dairy, when did he quit there and move up to Estes Park?

HD It must have been in the early forties.

MB There's a story we've heard that his operation was the first and only certified dairy in the state, and because of that, it was under contract to Buckley or some government facility during the war.

HD It wasn't a government facility, but they bought his products. He started this dairy, and he got this certification for the certified-pasteurized milk. I don't know whether you'd call it a patent or what; but at any rate he got a hold of that and started buying milk everywhere, Denver and all over the country.

My brother ran a truck line and day after day hauled milk up there to have it pasteurized. Schwilke has run the trucking line ever since. But the contract Marden got from Buckley was terrible. I know because he couldn't keep any help and wasn't paying anything except what he had to pay, that was all. He finally talked me into going over there and running the blooming pasteurizing building for quite a while, but the contract was outrageous. He had a contract to furnish four thousand quarts of pasteurized milk a day to Buckley Field. He had four cows; the rest of the milk came from the valley. He hauled it up here, pasteurized it, bottled it, and hauled it back! But they could call up any morning before seven o'clock to say, "Well, our troops have been moved so we don't need any milk today." There he was with four thousand quarts of pasteurized milk and nothing to do with it! So he got the idea to haul it to Fort Lupton to the Columbine Condensory, and my brother hauled it for him.

Every quart he hauled down there cost him fifteen cents. "Michael," we said, "Why don't we pour it in the creek out here and save fifteen cents?" "Oh, no," he says, "People need it!" He was that kind of guy, and so he kept on. It just broke him, that's all. And then he moved over here. He started in the old creamery here, but it didn't last too

long, only until he lost his contract. If he had lost it before he started, he'd have been all right!

MW He'd have been better off! What year was that when he had the dairy?

HD Well, it was in the forties. It was at the start of the war when Buckley was going great guns.

MW Then there was electricity, water, and everything up there close by at that time, of course.

HD There was no pressurized water up in that Lazy H barn. There was a well. Later on they put in a little pump down by the creek for domestic use, not enough for a farm like that.

MB What was that weird story we heard about the air-raids and blackouts?

HD That had something to do with Sig Wagner.

BH Oh, yes.

HD I never did get in on that, but there was a lot of speculation that he was a German spy. Whether he was or not, I don't know.

BH With his listening post!

HD He did have quite an elaborate radio outfit there. I saw it, but I didn't know anything about it at all. I don't think he was a spy any more than I was.

BH I think he was picking up German or anything that was against us and passing it on to our authorities.

HD I do know that he was German and could talk and understand German, but there was some kind of story going around that he had something to do with spy rings.

BH They were watching him, I know.

HD Well, he did watch, but not necessarily us! There were a lot of stories at that time, but they didn't amount to much.

MB What about some of the places that you built or worked on?

BH Tell us about when you worked on the Stanley.

MB Oh, yes, one day when you were down here and we didn't have a recorder going, you were talking about how you replaced a piece on the Stanley there that was an eighth of an inch off and what you used for a scaffold.

HD Old man Stanley was there himself while I was working on the hotel. The contractor was--I can't say the name right now--anyway, Gus Shorey was the caretaker up there at the Craggs; part of it was there and then they added on to it and made it another story higher when I was there.

I boarded there with Dave Usher. Dave Usher was a contractor, and Gus Shorey was the caretaker.

BH That was at the Craggs?

HD Yes. Mr. Stanley had us working under the gun, and he called Dave Usher to do a job. Dave sent me up there to do it, which was to put a little piece of frieze up on the third story--you know how high it is up there! Of course, there was no way to get a ladder up there, so I stuck a plank out of the window, put some trunks on the end of it to hold it down, got out there, and fixed it. I was just taking my scaffold down when Mr. Stanley came out and looked up there. He had a right to look; it was his place. He said, "Son, that piece of molding isn't like the one that is up there."

"No, I said, "I walked down to the lumberyard and got that piece of molding. It's just the same except that it's an eighth of an inch high!" Three stories high that old man saw the eighth of an inch!

"Well," he said, "Son, if it isn't too much trouble, let's take it off and wait until we get a piece the right size!"

So I did. How could he see that three stories high!

BH Nobody in the world but he would ever be able to see the difference!

MB That must have been in about 1919 or '20?

HD It was the winter of '19 or '20.

MW What buildings were there then?

HD Just the main building; probably it was added on to, I don't know. My dad and I were in the timber business all the time, and we furnished a lot of lumber that was in the Stanley Hotel and a lot of it came from Howard James, who had the sawmill right square where the building is up at Hidden Valley. That's where we cut the lumber. That was before it was made a National Park.

MW Then, later other buildings were built: the Casino, the Manor House, and the Carriage House for the buggies and things like that.

HD There was a big bowling alley. I don't know whether that was in the Carriage House, but it was a pretty nice bowling alley. When Mr. Stanley lost it, this outfit, a bunch of Jews from Chicago, decided to tear up this bowling alley; in fact, I tore it up and took it out for them. The maple lumber was good, and I've still got some of it.

MW Better keep it for a souvenir; that might be all we'll have left!

HD The Stanley never was a money-maker. Mr. Stanley told me himself, "Henry, I come out here in the spring and bring thirty thousand dollars (which was a lot of money in those days) to operate, and I go back in the fall with ten or fifteen thousand." He was happy! Then they talk about making money!



MW At least it was gone!

HD At any rate, he was honest!

MW That's for sure.

Did you know Mrs. Mills quite well? Probably both Mrs. Mills!

HD Yes, you see Joe Mills owned the Craggs at that time. He was coach at CU. Then, as for the other Mrs. Mill, I knew Enos Mills for years and years before he married her. In fact, the first candy bar I can remember having seen was given to me by Enos Mills. My dad was hauling lumber over there when they were building the Long's Peak Inn. When you got over there, you always had to go in to eat with them, and Mr. Mills would always come in to eat with the help. I was about twelve years old, and those Hershey candy bars were quite the thing.

MW Quite a deal! Do you know any history about this Wild Basin place that burned down?

HD Not particularly, I don't know whether Mr. Copeland homesteaded or how he got in there originally, but the first we knew he owned the place. He's the guy who put the water in the lake. The lake was a natural lake, but he dug the ditch from the creek to get the water in there. Then, a fellow by the name of Webb got a hold of it. I think he's the one who started that--I don't know who built the original part of that lodge. Then, George Hart got it, and I did a lot of building there while he had it. Eventually, Walter Coulhan from the First National Bank of Longmont got a hold of it, and that's how the Coulhans that you probably knew there came to be. They were cousins of Walter, and Jim Coulhan was caretaker at Camp Malo until he died, I guess--I'm not sure. Then, it batted around back and forth before Rolf got a hold of it. It's like the Stanley though in that it never did make any money, unless Rolf made money on it. I don't know.

BH Well, they were all just summer places; they were never meant to be winter places. That's where everyone lost his money trying to make them "all year."

HD Jo and I lived there in that little house facing the old lodge, first house on the left up there. We lived there the winter before Joyce was born, and I worked there all winter.

MW Now, you have a son Bernie, who is in business with you, and a daughter Joyce?

HD Yes.

BH And Al is in the business.

MW A son-in-law?

HD It's a family affair: son, son-in-law, and Joyce is the bookkeeper.

BH Dannels and Sons!

HD At first it was just Dannels and Son. Then, when Al came along, we just put an "s" on it!

BH I know!

HD When Joyce and Al were married, he was a shop teacher in a Denver public school. His first year there he didn't like too well, and he came up here the first summer to work for us. That's thirty-six years ago, and he's still here!

BH He never left. He was in service, too, and flew fighter planes.

HD Oh, yes! He flew in France and Korea.

BH He used to buzz your house and mine at the same time, and it felt as though the roof was going up and down. Everybody knew when Al Sager hit town!

HD He pretty nearly scared Ralph Sahn to death!

MW Yes, he did!

HD We were working down at Big Elk Meadows on a building in there when that area first started, and Ralph was out there on a pile of lumber about six feet high. He had some soil pipes standing up that he was caulking with lead the way they do when they build, and Al came and swooped down. Ralph thought that he was going to hit the pipe. He didn't miss it too far!

BH I can remember those days when he just zoomed by. Of course, you can't do that now, or you shouldn't do it!

HD Well, he shouldn't have done it then!

BH No, but he was having fun!

HD If somebody had turned in his number, he would have been in trouble then, but we all enjoyed it.

BH Everyone just said, "There goes Al!"

MB While we're on airplanes, could you spout off something about the airport situation?

HD Yes, there was an airport out where the country club is now. They built it out there, and quite a few little planes landed out there. I saw one two-motor plane that landed there, the only one I know of.

BH The St. Louis Dispatch plane that could hardly get off the field?

HD It had hardly enough room to get off. It landed all right. Then, there were some little planes. In fact, Al rented a plane in Denver and brought Joyce up. That was before they were married, and they landed there. Then, he took me up. That was the first time I'd ever been up. Of course, the field didn't pay, and it wound up being a golf course.

BH They had the Flying Farmers of America there once for a get-together, and the place was loaded with little planes. They could get on and off.

MB Was there an airport at two different times or just once?

HD Just once.

MB So it existed from about when to when?

HD Well, I don't remember the dates. Oh, it wasn't more than two years that you could land there.

BH The winds are wrong in the first place, and then, of course, the field. There was that one photographer that came up, and when he took off, he couldn't make it up over the lake part down there. He crashed!

MW There were airpockets. Weren't they having trouble with them?

HD It wasn't a good place for an airport. To start with it wasn't long enough. Little planes couldn't get enough speed to get off the ground.

BH That was it.

MB At this altitude they need a longer runway.

HD Of course, little planes that long ago were not as dependable as they are now.

MW Then, they had a helicopter that landed at the Stanley Hotel for a while, too. I got a ride in that.

HD Did you? I always wanted to go up in that, but I never had the opportunity.

MW It crashed after that!

BH Well, there was some fellow up here that worked for the transportation company when it was down there on the main street, and he had a glider. He was forever coming up here and gliding. You could watch him. I'll have to look up his name, but that was his thing. You know with the air currents up here, it was just beautiful watching him, but I would never go up on a bet! He would take off from that strip. I don't remember his name, but he did work down at that transportation company when it was that open building and drove the buses.

HD When they had the old Stanley Steamers and then later on the white buses in there, a fellow by the name of Walter Fulton, who was an old timer here, was boss and mechanic there for a good many years. He and the barber who used to be in Longmont--I forget what his name was--anyway, during the war everyone was supposed to have a birth certificate, and not everyone had one. I didn't have one and had to get one. My mother and dad were both still alive when I went to get my birth certificate, and you know they wouldn't take their signatures for me to get my birth certificate!

MW They wouldn't?

- HD No, of course, Mother wouldn't know a thing about it! Anyway, this Walter Fulton and this barber who lived in Longmont were working for my dad at the sawmill over at Allenspark the day I was born, and Dad remembered that and got them to sign the papers. I thought that was the darnedest thing!
- BH That was ridiculous! That's the way it worked back then, you know! Was that the only sawmill you had, the one up at Hidden Valley?
- HD Yes, in this area. Dad "sawmilled" in Allenspark and Ward and over in there all the time after he came here from Iowa when he was nineteen years old. He stayed here for all the rest of his life. There were several other mills around; Griffith's out there for one.
- BH Yes, that's what I was thinking of; it went up on the hills.
- HD They went up a little farther with an operation different from Hidden Valley's at Bierstadt Lake.
- BH That Griffith? I'm glad to know. It was a real undertaking because they had buildings up there and roads.
- HD I can't remember what the old man's name was, Dan Griffith's dad. I guess it's ~~Albert~~<sup>Albin</sup>. He was a timberman and a preacher on the side. *Albin* He used to come over to Allenspark, and in those days they didn't have clear limber from the coast and everything like that. So Dad always saved clear lumber boards without knots until he'd get a big load of it, and Albert would come over, buy it, and bring it over here to sell at the yard, the clear stuff that he couldn't get anywhere else.
- BH They had the Griffith Lumber Yard and the Estes Lumber Yard at the same time.
- HD Howard James started the Estes Park Lumber Yard, same place---
- BH Well, where it is now except that it's---
- HD Well, no, down there on Elkhorn Avenue was where the lumber yard was.
- BH Well, out at the west end---
- MB Where the Carriage Art Gallery is---
- BH Right behind Chapmans' house.
- HD James started that, and Dad ran the sawmill for him up at Hidden Valley. They hauled the lumber down here, and then later on James hauled the lumber down here, and then later on James hauled the lumber from our mills at Allenspark over here. He sold it to someone named Schwartz, and eventually he rounded up Gary Casey. The Sterling Lumber and Investment Company bought it from Schwartz, who ran it and still owns it.
- BH Then, Albert Griffith, the old man, started the one on---where is it now? Dan, who was about my age or a little older, practically ran

the thing for the old man.

MW You know I talked to Fay Brainard some time ago, who had property up around Kirkwood, and I thought it was interesting when he told me about putting in the electricity, water, and different things like that.

HD That was Charlie Hewes's, his mother's, and Steve Hewes's. She and the two boys all homesteaded up there, and it was known as Hewes-Kirkwood. Kirkwood was his mother's name, and then when they went broke, as most old-timers did, Fay Brainard and Everett May---

MW Wasn't Dick MacCracken in it some way?

HD He might have been, and with some other guy named McKelvey, they got a hold of it. They split it up and started selling lots up there. Something like a post office used to be up at the Kirkwood.

BH Yes, they've still got those little boxes.

HD I had the contract carrying the mail for a good many years from Longmont up there. Back in the old days there was no maintenance on the road, and it was different from what it is nowadays. The mail contract said that the mail had to go whether by foot or horseback, and that's the way we did!

BH By hell or high water!

HD I suppose I made a thousand trips from Allenspark to Hewes-Kirkwood on horseback and probably half that many on skis.

BH And that is a long way coming up from Longmont, too!

HD The post office was at Allenspark, and the branch post office was here. Old Charlie Hewes surely was a wonderful character, but he couldn't make money if he had a mint. Everything he did went haywire.

BH Well, did you build that building?

HD No, I helped. In fact, Charlie himself was the boss on all of this, and John Miller, who married my half-sister, built a lot of it.

BH Every time I see a nice big log house I always think of you because your log houses are "beauts" and still are!

HD I started out several years ago to take pictures of all the houses I've built, but I never did get it done.

MW That would be interesting. When did you build your place here? You've been living there quite a while.

HD We've been living in that house forty-six or forty-seven years. It was when we had to move over here for Bernard to go to high school. We rented in town for two years, and then I built.

BH Was the Ranchhouse, that is going to be "demised," there when you moved? It wasn't?

HD No, I can't remember the guy's name, but he was a character, too!

BH It was a beer joint with a dance floor. Now, this is what I'm trying to---

HD Back in the days when you didn't have to have a license, all you had to do---

BH But it was out of town, over the town line!

MW Not in the city limits!

HD I don't know whether you had to have a license in town long ago, but anyway he was a character, another guy I thought to be a crook. I don't know whether he was or not. He built that thing mostly out of scraps, and he just kept going.

MW Did you have anything to do with the country club over there when it was built? It's built of logs, so that we think of you!

HD Charlie Chapman and Elmer Wright probably are the ones, I'm not sure. Charlie Chapman was an old-time contractor here. His wife lived until the last year or two there by the lumberyard, but he was one contractor that the public did not get ahead of. When he told somebody he would build them a house for an X number of dollars or whatever, he put that money in the bank in a joint account before he ever drove a nail. He was smart!

MW I should say!

MB Speaking of logs and airplanes and all of this, in one of the vacation editions of The Trail there is a photograph taken in 1951, I think, of the airplane that landed over here at the airport. It was at this end of town. It shows the reclamation area, the lake, a corner of the race track, and one of the log blockhouses that are down here, right about where the museum is setting.

HD We moved the blockhouses up there. Si Hurd built one of them, and I built two of them, down where you say, right above here. Then, they were moved up there for gate houses.

MB They were at the Fourth Street entrance up here at first, and they were then moved over to where they are now. And you built two of them?

BH How can you tell which ones you built?

HD I don't know whether I could now or not!

MB One reason we have an interest in this is that last year something was said about replacing those with a new entranceway, and we put in a request to the town that we don't want those blockhouses winding up in somebody's fireplace. They should be over here at the museum.

HD I think they should leave them right square where they are!

BH I do, too, I think they are fantastic.

- MB If they decide to take them out of there, then the next place we thought they should be placed is here by the museum to use them as a place for things about horse shows and rodeos as well as for storage and whatever.
- BH Didn't you put your initial on any log, or did you miss a nail so that we could--
- HD I missed nails, I'm sure of that, but I don't know whether I could tell which ones I did or not!
- BH How about one of those five or six inch spikes that they used on those!
- MB There's also the story in the paper about the logs coming from Twin Sisters.
- HD The one that Si Hurd built probably did, but the ones that I built have logs that came over from Rock Creek, south of Estes Park. I know because I cut the logs and brought them up myself.
- BH How can you tell?
- MW Now, you had a lot to do with this museum, too! Did you start the building?
- HD Not too much. We did the first part; we donated the floor.
- MW This part?
- MB The original building!
- HD I think that is about all I did. I did help with different things. In fact, Charley Baker did some work around here on the roof one time, and I helped him a day or two.
- MW Did Al Alzheimer have the contract on that?
- HD I don't know; he probably did.
- BH He didn't have a contract. It was supposed to be donated work, but Alzheimer always put in a bill. He did, I know because I went through all of the bills once and counted up the amount that had been paid out to the man.
- MW Alzheimer was in charge somehow.
- BH But Roy Baldwin put in so much volunteer work and donated as everybody else.
- MW Fred did later.
- BH Yes.
- MW He laid the floor.
- BH He was one of the first because you had to get the floor down.

- MW I thought Mr. Dannels did the building, here.
- HD No, I didn't. I helped, but I was not the contractor.
- BH They had various people.
- MW So, we've come a little ways.
- HD Well, I don't know whether it helps to tell the many little incidents and things that concerned me. If I were a writer and had the brains, I'd like to start back as far as I could remember and write a history of my life.
- BH Why don't you get somebody who can take it down in shorthand? Rattle it off and let them record!
- HD Somebody like my granddaughter Lauren.
- MB If it would be comfortable for you to do, take a tape recorder, sit down, and write it verbally!
- HD Lauren has suggested that she do the writing, and I do the talking! But I've never gotten to it.
- MB That would be great!
- BH I think it would be, too, because that's what we need, more histories of individual people rather than somebody coming along, even back in the '30's and '40's and trying to go back there to say so-and-so did something.
- MB What are some of the things that you would include that we haven't talked about? We'll just sit back and listen.
- HD I don't know really where I would start! Of course, things were a lot different when I was a kid than when my kids were kids. As I said, we had summer school because it was so hard to get to school in the winter time. As I remember, once in a while, every two or three years, Dad took Mother and us kids down to Longmont for the winter; and he'd stay in Allenspark. We'd go to school down in Longmont. Of course, back in those days there were no cars, and if you went to Longmont, it was a three-day trip with a team. You'd go down one day and unhitch your load, shop the next day, and then it was a long day home. A good team of horses too fourteen hours from Longmont to Allenspark.
- MW The roads weren't that good then either.
- HD Just a dirt road.
- HD In fact, I rode a bicycle from Allenspark to Longmont on the dirt road when I must have been about eighteen. I rode from Allenspark to Longmont in two and a half hours on a bicycle on the dirt road.
- BH That's downhill!
- HD Yes! The break would get so hot that it would start smoking, so I'd stop and dip the bicycle in the creek. It was a lot of fun.



BH Did you ride it back up?

HD No, I hauled it back on the wagon. Talk about riding the bicycle, I used to get so much kick out of it that my grandsons thought it would be great sport to get me a bicycle this past Christmas. They got me a really nice ten-speed bicycle, but it has a higher frame than bicycles used to have. When I straddle it, my feet don't reach the ground. I rode up the curve there behind my house the next Sunday after Christmas; and when I went to put my foot on the curb, I missed the curb and lit right on my shoulder on the sidewalk, knocking this shoulder out of place. I've been laid up ever since!

MW So, even transportation is different.

HD That's for sure.

BH Back then, were the winters really harder?

HD I'll tell you, people nowadays don't know what winters are!

BH And it wasn't because we didn't have snowplows!

HD No, it wasn't that it was just the snow. In fact, when I carried the mail into Hewes-Kirkwood, Charlie Hewes kept track of the snow for the government. It wasn't exactly a government measuring station, but he kept track of the snow. At that time the ten-year average for the winter was twenty-one feet. Now, it's down to less than four feet.

MW Especially this year!

HD Yes. You just can't believe how deep the snow was.

BH All the old-timers agree with the things you hear about the heavy snowfalls. Even when I first came up here, we had snows three-feet deep on the ground.

HD The fact is that if it hasn't been blown down or cut down, a tree over there at the lower end of the meadow at the Mountain Meadow Ranch, the Girl Scout Ranch now, proves our point. One winter we had school down where Jack Coffee first lived, down on the road where you turn in sometimes, because Vera Rubendall and we were the only ones a little closer in Allenspark. One morning we were going to school, and I cut my initials in the bark on the tree. The next spring Dad measured the initials were twenty-one feet from the ground! I had been standing on snowdrifts.

Lots of times I saw a team moving in or out of the ranch either with a load or an empty wagon with four horses, only to get the horses down in the snow and have to drive around them so that they could get up. You can't believe the difference unless you've seen it. Most people just plain don't believe it when you tell them.

BH Many people come up here expecting to find clear weather, and when we've had some hard winters, they have left even when there are small amounts of snow.

HD It's hard to get people to believe how hard it was, or how good it is now!

BH They come up in the summer and think that's the way it is all year!

MB More highlights?

HD Well, I don't know.

MW I can't think of any either.

HD There are a million things you can think of, but you don't know where to start.

MW That's right!

BH Now, that Mountain Meadow Ranch, where the Girl Scouts are, is your old homestead?

HD I've got an oil painting of that by Knute Thomas, an artist who used to live in Lyons. He worked for my dad quite a bit. He made an oil painting of that house in 1912 from down in the meadow.

BH Has the house been changed a lot since then?

HD Well, it's been changed, but you can still see the original.

BH I've been up there and been in it.

HD I was born in the room that's on the southwest corner of the house. That room is still the way it was.

BH That's interesting because that's a beautiful place in there.

HD It has been let go so badly that it's not like it was. It hasn't been taken care of. In that meadow we had timothy growing high, and they've plastered it down so that it is hardly green any more. It's just ruined. We had a spring, you know; the spring that supplies the water there at the ranch is in the National Park. When they created the National Park, Dad filed on it, and whatever the deal was, he had lifetime use of the spring as long as the ranch is there.

We had an open ditch coming down. Of course, in the winter it froze up quite a bit of the time, but it flowed a stream of water to the house. We had a trough out there, three twelve-inch boards, one on the bottom and one on each side, and it flowed half-full from that spring. Now, the water from that spring is coming down in an inch-and-a-half pipe. The spring is just dried up from no snow. That was one of the jobs I had all the time in summer when I was a kid, to go down there every day and change that irrigation water in the meadows.

BH That's what made that good hay?

HD They don't have it now--

MW Did you have cattle?

HD We did!

MW Some time ago? Up there?

- HD No, there haven't been any cattle up there since we had them. Jack Coffee got ahold of it. Dad had to sell it way back when, and I didn't have the money to buy it or would have. Another party bought it first, and eventually Jack Coffee got ahold of it. He had some property in Big Elk down here which he traded with a Min. Mill for the ranch. Finally, he sold it to the Girl Scouts.
- BH Since we're talking about hay, would you tell me why the elk won't touch all that high grass up there in Beaver Meadows? Do you know any reason why they won't?
- HD No, I don't. (Ed. Note: Chester Brooks, Dept. of NMNP, explains that the hay has reverted to native broom grass, which the elk find neither appetizing nor nourishing.)
- BH It's hay because you know there is a ditch up there where it was watered, and that stuff just bends over. The elk lie in it, but they won't eat it!
- MW That's because they can come down in our gardens and yards where it is easier to find food!
- HD And my apple trees! In fact, we've got more hay up there. It used to be a ranch. I don't know whether there are any buildings left up there anymore or not up in Beaver Meadows.
- BH No, they're all down.
- HD We bought hay there and hauled it up to Hidden Valley one season for the horses.
- BH That's what I can't understand. With all this stuff out there, they'll graze up on the south slope where the grass is low, mixed with dirt, a little sage, and browse; but they won't touch the lush stuff. There are a lot of meadows like that.
- HD I was amused to see in The Trail recently that piece about the timber cut up on "The Twins" where that fire was. The timber was going to be thinned out to make meadows for the elk to graze in. They couldn't raise a blade of grass up on that hill no matter what they do!
- BH Why don't they know that?
- HD Those guys running that know everything there is in the book, but as for common sense, they don't know when to come in out of the rain! I'd tell them so, too!
- BH It's so dumb to do something like that.
- HD They're talking about selling part of the timber now, letting the area grow up for about twenty years, and then doing some more cutting. Well, if a tree did manage to get started again, it would only be this high in twenty years! Really, I've had experience on Rock Creek with clear cutting forest. I bought that Rock Creek area of timber along about '25 or '26, bought two and one-half million feet of supposedly "saw" timber and the government was supposed to spot every tree that I cut.

They were supposed to spot 80% of the trees, which I'm sure they did. I went in and cut probably forty or sixty acres of it the first summer, 80% of it; and that winter every last tree that I had left blew down!

Every last one of them, and it will do that up here. Then, after that, the Forest Service gave me a clean cut, and I went in and just cleaned out the whole works. That's been quite a while ago, of course, but the reas has grown up now. Trees average about eight feet high. They're too thick, but that's the way to get them started. If they cut over now and then come back in another twenty years to tear it up, that's all there will be to it!

MB And it took fifty years to get them eight feet high!

BH Yes!

MW Did we mention anything about this Clarabelle Mine? Do you know anything about that, whether there was such a thing or were there stockholders? Where was it?

HD Yes, I do. No, there was no gold there. The mill itself was right across the road--no, right on the same side of the road where you turn into the Girl Scout Ranch.

BH Yes, I've been up there and walked up the road.

HD It was a stock-selling stunt. There's a picture of how it used to be.

MW At Mt. Meeker?

HD I don't know. The McAllister fellow is the man who got it started, I think. You know Johnny "Mac" who had the garage over there for a hundred years or so? His dad was the ramrod of the outfit. It was a stock-selling stunt, and they had the mine over in what is called Newton Flat. I don't know whether you know where that is or not, but if you go from the entrance to the Girl Scout Ranch and head over the hill towards Ferncliff--

BH Newtons had Ferncliff once, too!

HD Yes, but that's another story!

BH But when you said that--

HD Anyway, that's where this mine is. They had this thing here, and they had a cable tramway. There's where the tramway went into the mill; the tramway hauled the ore from the mine over to the mill.

MW It was an ore mine?

HD Yes, but there was no ore there. They planted gold on the old stockpile. That's a fact--they salted it! They were just about ready to start the thing. They had this water power outfit on the North St. Vrain, which started, I suppose, a half to three-quarters mile below Copeland. They built a flume and had a really nice outfit. When they were all ready to start, they didn't dare because no gold would be coming out of that

blooming mill! So they decided that they'd go ahead with the water project and electric power and put in a steam outfit. Well, they got the steam engine and everything there, and they used a lot of lumber.

In fact, my dad furnished all the lumber which they were hauling from Green Mountain where we had the mill. My dad got a pretty good-sized check that bounced because there was no money in the bank. So, the next day when their four-horse team came after lumber, Dad sent them home. Well, that made Dad "Mac" mad, and he said, "Let that so-and-so keep his lumber; we'll build a sawmill and make our own lumber." They went to Denver, bought a new sawmill, moved it up there, and put it in that shed, still in the crate. It sat there for at least thirty-five years! They went ahead and paid their lumber bill, but then this thing finally blew up. Eventually with the years, Burns Will bought the land and the buildings for taxes, the whole works. Then, he turned around and sold us the sawmill for taxes, and that's the sawmill with which I started my sawmilling!

MB It was still new!

MW Are the buildings still there?

MB No, but you can see where it was.

BH You can see a lot of trash and stuff.

MW And that's all?

HD Yes, if you're acquainted with the country, you know where you turn into the Girl Scout Ranch? Well, right to the left of that is kind of a knoll where that hill sticks out there. You can still see that the excavation sat right there.

MW This is the only mine you know of around here?

HD That's the only one that got going that much. There are a lot of prospect holes. There's one up the creek from where this mine was in which the Frank boys from Longmont dug for a good many years. They had some gold there, but the rock was such that at that time it cost more to mill it than they could get out of it. I have a hunch if somebody got into that mine now, it might pay.

MW I have wondered why there aren't some mines or mills--

HD That was a tunnel, and it went back into the hill there about an eighth of a mile or better. I've been in it dozens of times years ago, but it's all caved in now. Unless you crawl, you can't get in there. I've wondered often whether somebody using today's modern equipment couldn't make it work, considering the price of gold.

MW You'd better buy the property first and then go in to get a sample!

BH Or get the mining rights!

HD There's another mine up on the hill behind Hewes-Kirkwood Inn, which the "musicks" (Rocky Ridge Music Center) have now.

BH Any digging?

HD Yes, you've probably been through that. They claim there was some gold there, Whether there was or not, I don't know, but I was up there years ago. Dad, of course, delivered lumber up there. They had some buildings up there.

MW There is supposed to be gold in those hills, you know!

BH I'm sure the National Park thinks that there is! I've heard that, but you can't--

HD No, the Park would not let you get in there even if there were a million dollars lying on the top of the ground!

BH Yes, if it were, I's sure take it. It seems surprising really that since there is so much mining potential down at Ward, it would stand to reason that mining should be possible coming northward all through this area.

HD It's different kind of country, I can see that, and different kind of rock. It's funny how you can't tell where gold is or where to look for it.

BH No.

MW Could a river make a difference?

BH Well, there's Lulu City over on the other side where they mined on Shipler Mountain.

MB What about that ski area which is down by Allenspark that ran for--

HD That was a good ski outfit there for a while. It had a nice club. In fact, I was president of the ski club. The first ski course we had was over on what we called "the townsite." Going towards Rock Creek, it would have been sloping to the north just over the hill from Allenspark. We had a good ski course there and had tournaments. The Hagen boys (professional Norwegian skiers) and representatives of the Northland Ski Company came, and we had a big time up there for a few years.

BH Now that was just south of the ski area that is south of Allenspark?

HD It's as if you were going up Rockcliff.

BH Yes, I used to come up there and ski when I was going to CU. They had a little gas-powered motor that had a rope from which they made "tows."

HD Yes, that was a pretty good little ski area.

BH I know it was.

HD In fact, I took first prize in Men's Class A there one year on a pair of homemade skis! Darnedest thing, I made three jumps. I jumped 76, 78, and 79 feet in three tries on that hill. Lars Hagen, who was head man of the Northland Ski Company, said at the banquet that night

after the tournament that if I'd give him those skis, he'd take them back to put in their display case at the Northland factory and send me a good pair of skis to replace them. He never did even though I sent him registered letters and everything else!

BH He took the skis, however!

HD He took the skis, and that's all I got out of it.

BH That's why they call that road Ski Hill Road over there.

HD Right. The other ski course is up past the church a little way and then up to the left.

BH I don't think I've been up there.

HD In the last few years somebody built a house right where we used to stop coming down, but you can still see the track.

BH That first one had a good track.

HD Yes, that was lots of fun.

BH It was close to Boulder, and people came up from there.

HD I had a lot of fun skiing there. A bunch of us used to get together on a Sunday morning to go up on Bald Mountain. We'd go up hill until two or three o'clock and then turn around and have a big time coming back down! It was a lot of fun.

MB When did they quit operating in these ski areas over there?

HD They never did much after I moved over here.

I'll tell you about Allenspark. Long ago it seemed as though there was some kind of feud going all the time. I don't know who or what about, but there was always some damned argument. That's what happened.

BH Just like Estes Park!

HD Yes, only it wasn't that size, and it just fizzled out.

MW I didn't think that happened years ago!

MB I think that has happened ever since Cain killed Abel, hasn't it?

BH Since the beginning of time!

MW Always will be!

HD There is always something going on--some, good, some bad.

MB Well, this tape is just about to the end, I think.

MW It has been very interesting, though, and I'm sure there is a lot more that you could tell us.

HD Yes!

MB We might get together some other time when you get your trees growing up there, and we'll do another tape.

BH I'd like to know how many years you've been picking apples off that apple tree?

HD Oh, that apple tree is about 38 years old.

BH Is it a crabapple?

HD Yes, it's a crabapple.

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